



MEDIA RELEASE

STATE OF TENNESSEE
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TENNESSEE RECEIVES \$80 MILLION TO HELP CITIZENS PAY UTILITY BILLS *LIHEAP FUNDING MORE THAN DOUBLES IN VOLUNTEER STATE*

NASHVILLE – Amid the current dismal economic news, there finally was some good news for citizens who are struggling to pay their utility bills. The Tennessee Department of Human Services was granted more than \$80 million to provide heating and cooling assistance to low income families. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) late Thursday released \$5.1 billion for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Tennessee's share is \$80.5 million, which is \$50 million more than last year's allocation.

"LIHEAP is a critical program for thousands of Tennesseans in need," said Human Services Commissioner Virginia T. Lodge. "We have never been able to serve all of the eligible families who apply for LIHEAP assistance. This funding boost will give our community partners the opportunity to take thousands of people off their waiting lists and give them help in the upcoming cold weather months."

Nineteen community agencies administer the program across all 95 counties in Tennessee. LIHEAP is 100% federally funded through a grant from HHS. Eligibility for LIHEAP benefits is based on established federal poverty guidelines, and documentation of household income is required. Tennesseans whose household income does not exceed 125 percent of federal poverty guidelines (that's \$26,500/year for a family of four) are potentially eligible for the program. Priority is given to elderly and/or disabled citizens.

The assistance does not go directly to the client. Instead, it is made in the form of a payment to the utility company or home energy provider. More than 80,000 Tennessee families are assisted each year through the LIHEAP program, and even with rising energy costs, DHS and its community partners should double the number of families the program serves.

For more information about the Department of Human Services and its programs, please click on the following link: <http://www.state.tn.us/humanserv>

For a listing of LIHEAP agencies and contact numbers across the state, see the following page:

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CITIZENS PLAZA, 15TH FLOOR
400 DEADERICK STREET
NASHVILLE, TN 37248
615.313.4700

Community Service Agency Name	Agency Telephone Number
Blount County Community Action Agency	865-983-8411
Bradley-Cleveland Community Services Agency	423-479-4111
Chattanooga Human Services Dept.	423-757-5551
Clarksville-Montgomery County Community Action Agency	931-648-5774
Delta Human Resource Agency (serving Fayette, Tipton & Lauderdale Counties)	901-476-5226
Douglas-Cherokee Economic Authority, Inc. (serving Cocke, Grainger, Hamblen, Jefferson, Monroe & Sevier Counties)	423-587-4500
East Tennessee Human Resources Agency (serving Anderson, Claiborne, Morgan, Campbell, Scott & Union Counties)	865-691-2551
Highland Rim Economic Corporation (serving Dickson, Stewart, Houston & Humphreys Counties)	931-289-4101
Knoxville-Knox County Community Action Committee	865-546-3500
Metropolitan Action Commission (Davidson County)	615-862-8860
Mid-Cumberland Community Action Agency (serving Cheatham, Sumner, Trousdale, Rutherford, Robertson, Wilson & Williamson Counties)	615-742-1113 or 615-453-2243
Mid-East Community Action Agency (serving Loudon & Roane Counties)	865-354-0450
Northwest Tennessee Economic Development Council (serving Benton, Carroll, Crockett, Dyer, Henry, Lake, Gibson & Obion Counties)	731-364-3228
Shelby County Community Services Agency	901-545-4630
South Central Human Resource Agency (serving Bedford, Coffee, Giles, Lewis, Lincoln, Wayne, Franklin, Maury, Perry, Lawrence, Marshall, Hickman & Moore Counties)	931-433-7182
Southeast Tennessee Human Resource Agency (serving Bledsoe, Grundy, Marion, McMinn, Meigs, Polk, Rhea & Sequatchie Counties)	423-949-2191
Southwest Human Resource Agency (serving Chester, Decatur, Hardin, Hardeman, Haywood, Henderson, Madison & McNairy Counties)	731-989-5111
Upper Cumberland Human Resource Agency (serving Cannon, Cumberland, Dekalb, Fentress, Overton, Pickett, Putnam, Warren, White, Van Buren, Clay, Jackson, Macon & Smith Counties)	931-528-1127
Upper East Tennessee Human Development Agency (serving Carter, Greene, Hancock, Hawkins, Johnson Unicoi, Sullivan & Washington Counties)	423-246-6180

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